

IPM Reduces Pests and Pesticides on Air Force Installations

by Wayne Fordham

HQ AFCEA, Tyndall AFB, Fla.

The Air Force is continuing to support Integrated Pest Management (IPM) techniques as a means to control pests while reducing pesticide use. The IPM approach to pest control uses regular monitoring to first determine if and when treatments are needed. In situations where controls are warranted, a combination of physical, mechanical, cultural, biological and educational tactics are employed to keep pest numbers low enough to prevent intolerable damage or annoyance. Least-toxic chemical controls are used as a last resort.

Installation Success Stories

Following are several innovative ideas currently being used by Air Force pest managers as part of their IPM programs. If you have a question contact the POC listed.

Beale AFB, Calif. (9th CES)

Several hundred bats made their way into the Beale Air Force Base Commissary last year. To say the least, shopping was interrupted when the bats appeared to be attacking customers. In reality, the bats were swooping down at the shiny floor thinking it was water. Using homemade bat excluders at bat entry points, sealing the rain gutter/roof interfaces and physically removing the bats, achieved control of the problem. Later, the bat population was drawn away from base buildings by using special nesting boxes. Now the bats are assisting pest control efforts by eating lots of insects. (Richard Lewis DSN 368-2713)

Fairchild AFB, Wash. (92nd Support Group)

Airplanes at Fairchild AFB now have a safer environment to operate in thanks to the use of a falcon program. A contractor that uses falcons to harass and move pest bird species off the airfield provides support for a critical part of their Bird Aircraft Strike Hazard program. (Jerry Johnson DSN 657-2313)



Hickam AFB, Hawaii (15th CES)

Termites, especially Formosan termites, are a serious problem to control on military bases in Hawaii. The Sentricon system modernizes ground treatment by using bait methods versus the expensive sub-slab conventional methods. Using this new technology resulted in savings of more than \$500,000 in contract fees and successful elimination of termite colonies at 20 sites. (Art Buckman DSN 449-9695)

Minot AFB, N.D. (5th CES)

The Minot pest management shop was first in the Department of Defense to have their Pest Management Plan (and many other supporting documents) placed on a CD-ROM. Shop operations also benefited from using a shrouded boom sprayer, which allows for herbicide application in windy conditions without damage to nearby crops. The Air Force Civil Engineer Support Agency, which is responsible for the Air Force's pest management program, recently provided each major command with a copy of Minot's Pest Management CD-ROM. (Vicki Johnson DSN 453-2393)

Nellis AFB, Nev. (99th CES)

Evaluation of a new type of herbicide sprayer (WeedSeeker), within the framework of the Air Force's Management Equipment Evaluation Program, has shown that significant labor and chemical savings are possible. This item will soon be available to purchase Air Force-wide. (SSgt Pacheco DSN 682-5613 or Don Teig DSN 574-2766)



Sheppard AFB, Texas (82nd CES)

The Sheppard pest control program uses an IPM approach that opts for biological control agents rather than traditional chemicals. One example is the use of nematodes — a microscopic, slender, unsegmented worm — to control fire ants. The Environmental Protection Agency, Region 6, recognized Sheppard's outstanding IPM program as a model in Texas for pesticide reduction. (Tim Hunter DSN 736-5698)

U.S. Air Force Academy, Colo. (10th CES)

Cliff swallows began causing sanitation problems in a high-visibility area at the U.S. Air Force Academy. By placing Plexiglas sheets on areas the cliff swallows were using, the base solved the problem without using lethal methods of control. (Sais Archuleta DSN 333-4184)